

Abstract

A method and apparatus (12, 112) for helping to protect an occupant (30, 130) of a seat (14, 114) of a vehicle (10, 110) includes a sensor (36, 200) responsive to at least one of a side impact event or a rollover event for providing a crash event signal. A first vehicle occupant protection device (94, 210) is inflatable into a first position located beside the seat (14, 114). A second vehicle occupant protection device (50, 150) is inflatable into a second position located forward of the seat (14, 114). A controller (44, 144) is responsive to the crash event signal for immediately inflating the first vehicle occupant protection device (94, 210) and, a predetermined time after inflating the first vehicle occupant protection device (94, 210), inflating the second vehicle occupant protection device (50, 150).